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DIST 5 NOVEMBER 1968

COUNTRY SOUTH VIETNAM

DOI 4 NOVEMBER 1968

SUBJECT PEACE PROPOSAL OFFERED BY VICE PRESIDENT KY
AND APPROVED BY PRESIDENT THIEU AND OTHER
NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL MEMBERS AT
4 NOVEMBER 1968 MEETING

ACQ VIETNAM, SAIGON

SOURCE

1. MEMBERS OF THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE NATIONAL SECURITY

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NLJ 91-496

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COUNCIL, INCLUDING PRESIDENT NGUYEN VAN THIEU, ENDORSED AT THEIR 4 NOVEMBER 1968 MEETING A PROPOSAL OFFERED BY VICE PRESIDENT NGUYEN CAO KY. THE PROPOSAL, WHICH WAS THE ONLY ONE RAISED AT THE SESSION, CONTAINED THE FOLLOWING ESSENTIAL POINTS:

A. THE GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM (GVN) IS WILLING TO SEND A DELEGATION TO PARIS NOW IF IT IS MADE CLEAR THAT THE TALKS ARE "PRELIMINARY" AND NOT FULL-SCALE PEACE NEGOTIATIONS. A STATEMENT BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT AND THE GVN TO THIS EFFECT WOULD PROBABLY BE SUFFICIENT AS LONG AS NORTH VIETNAM (DRV) REMAINED SILENT.

B. DURING THE PRELIMINARY TALKS, THE GVN WILL TRY TO RESOLVE BY DIRECT TALKS WITH DRV REPRESENTATIVES THE QUESTION OF THE "SEPARATE ENTITY" STATUS OF THE NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT (NFLSV). IF NO ACCOMMODATION IS REACHED, THE GVN WOULD WITHDRAW FROM THE PARIS TALKS.

C. THE GVN WOULD THEN PROPOSE A THREE-STAGE SERIES OF NEGOTIATIONS TO END THE WAR:

(1) FIRST STAGE: CALLING OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ALONG THE LINES OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE. PARTICIPANTS WOULD INCLUDE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE KEY

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CONTENDING GOVERNMENTS, OTHER GOVERNMENTS FRIENDLY TO THEIR POSITIONS, AND A CERTAIN NUMBER OF NEUTRALS. (THE GVN RECOGNIZES THAT THE NFLSV WOULD BE REPRESENTED.) THE PURPOSE WOULD BE TO DETERMINE IF THERE IS ANY CHANCE OF REESTABLISHING THE STATUS QUO ANTE BELLUM, NAMELY, SEPARATE AND INDEPENDENT STATES IN NORTH AND SOUTH VIETNAM; RESPECT FOR A BOUNDARY AT THE 17TH PARALLEL; WITHDRAWAL OF ALL FOREIGN TROOPS, INCLUDING THOSE OF THE DRV AND U.S.; AND APPROPRIATE INTERNATIONAL GUARANTEES BACKED BY SUFFICIENT MILITARY FORCE. (SOURCE COMMENT: KY BELIEVES AGREEMENT MIGHT BE REACHED ALLOWING THE U.S. TO PROVIDE A SUBSTANTIAL PART OF THE PEACE-KEEPING FORCE.)

(2) SECOND STAGE: DIRECT TALKS BETWEEN THE DRV AND GVN, WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF RESOLVING CERTAIN INTERNATIONAL PROBLEMS BETWEEN THE TWO SOVEREIGN GOVERNMENTS. A POSSIBLE OUTCOME OF THESE TALKS MIGHT BE A MUTUAL NON-AGGRESSION TREATY AND AN AGREEMENT TO FOLLOW A POLICY OF NON-ALIGNMENT.

(3) THIRD STAGE: RESOLUTION OF THE NFLSV PROBLEM. THE GVN WOULD PRESENT THE DRV WITH TWO ALTERNATIVES. FIRST, IF THE DRV ACKNOWLEDGED THE NFLSV TO BE ITS TOOL

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AND BRAINCHILD, THE GVN WOULD ASK TO DEAL DIRECTLY WITH THE DRV ON MATTERS PERTAINING TO THE NFLSV. IF, ON THE OTHER HAND, THE DRV INSISTED THE NFLSV IS AN INDEPENDENT ORGANIZATION OF SOUTHERN NATIONALISTS, THE GVN WOULD TAKE THE POSITION THAT IT SHOULD NEGOTIATE DIRECTLY WITH THE NFLSV, WITH THE NEGOTIATIONS TAKING PLACE IN SAIGON AND HAVING THE APPEARANCE OF A SOVEREIGN GOVERNMENT DEALING WITH INSURGENTS.

2. KY EMPHASIZED TO THE MEETING THAT NOW THAT THE GVN HAS CLEARLY ESTABLISHED ITS DISSOCIATION FROM THE AMERICAN POSITION IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT THE GVN COME UP WITH CONSTRUCTIVE AND WORKABLE PROPOSALS. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] KY HOPES TO DISCUSS HIS PROPOSAL WITH AMBASSADOR BUNKER SOON.

3. [REDACTED] DASSEM: STATE (AMBASSADOR BUNKER, DEPUTY AMBASSADOR BERGER, POLITICAL COUNSELOR) USMACV (GENERAL ABRAMS, AMBASSADOR KOMER, MAJOR GENERAL DAVIDSON) 7TH AIR FORCE (GENERAL BROWN) CINCPAC PACFLT ARPAC PACAF [REDACTED]

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